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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0355
INFO RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN PRIORITY 0777
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 9390
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 3050
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 3200

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 000650

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CCA DAVID MCFARLAND

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/22/2018
TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [IT](#)
SUBJECT: ITALY: REVIEW FOR SUSPENSION OF TITLE III OF THE
LIBERTAD ACT

REF: STATE 52541

Classified By: A/Pol M/C Jonathan R. Cohen, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) This is post's response to reftel request for updated information necessary for the President's consideration of continued suspension of Title III of the LIBERTAD Act.

¶2. (C) There has been no significant change in Italian relations with Cuba over the past six months. There were no high-level diplomatic visits between Cuba and Italy during this period. The Italian Embassy in Havana continued to meet with opposition leaders as part of Italy's two-track approach to engage both Cuban government officials and the opposition. Italy did not participate in exchange programs with Cuba. There was no significant change in the level of Italian investment, joint ventures, or tourism in Cuba. The most substantial Italian investment in Cuba remained Telecom Italia's ownership stake in Etecsa, the Cuban telecom monopoly.

¶3. (C) The newly-elected GOI responded favorably to our approach regarding the May 21 "Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People." FM Frattini, Senate President Schifani, and Chamber President Fini all made public statements, which expressed support for the Cuban people's struggle for freedom, called on the Cuban government to respect fundamental human rights, and encouraged "concrete gestures on behalf of political prisoners."

¶4. (C) Comment: Embassy Rome recommends the continuation of Italy's waiver under Title III of the LIBERTAD Act, as we believe it helps Italy maintain positions critical of the Cuban regime.
SPOGLI